7. Issue Resolution Process

Introduction

The purpose of the issue resolution process is to organize, maintain and track the identification and resolution of issues that arise throughout the course of project. The WDTIP issue resolution process provides for a single point of entry, organization, and categorization of all project issues.

An issue is defined as a topic or concern that may affect project scope, risk, schedule, cost, and/or system quality or functionality and can be resolved through action. Any single person typically cannot resolve an issue. Issues may originate from inside and outside of the project. For example, a Federal policy change in the middle of system development may result in one or more issues.

It is expected that the majority of issues will be day-to-day issues concerning the internal operations of the project. However, there may be some potential scope issues as well. Scope issues typically expand the scope of the project either technically or functionally and therefore, may delay the project schedule and/or increase the cost of the project. Refer to Section 8, Scope and Change Order Process, for further details on the process to handle scope-related issues.

Process and Procedures

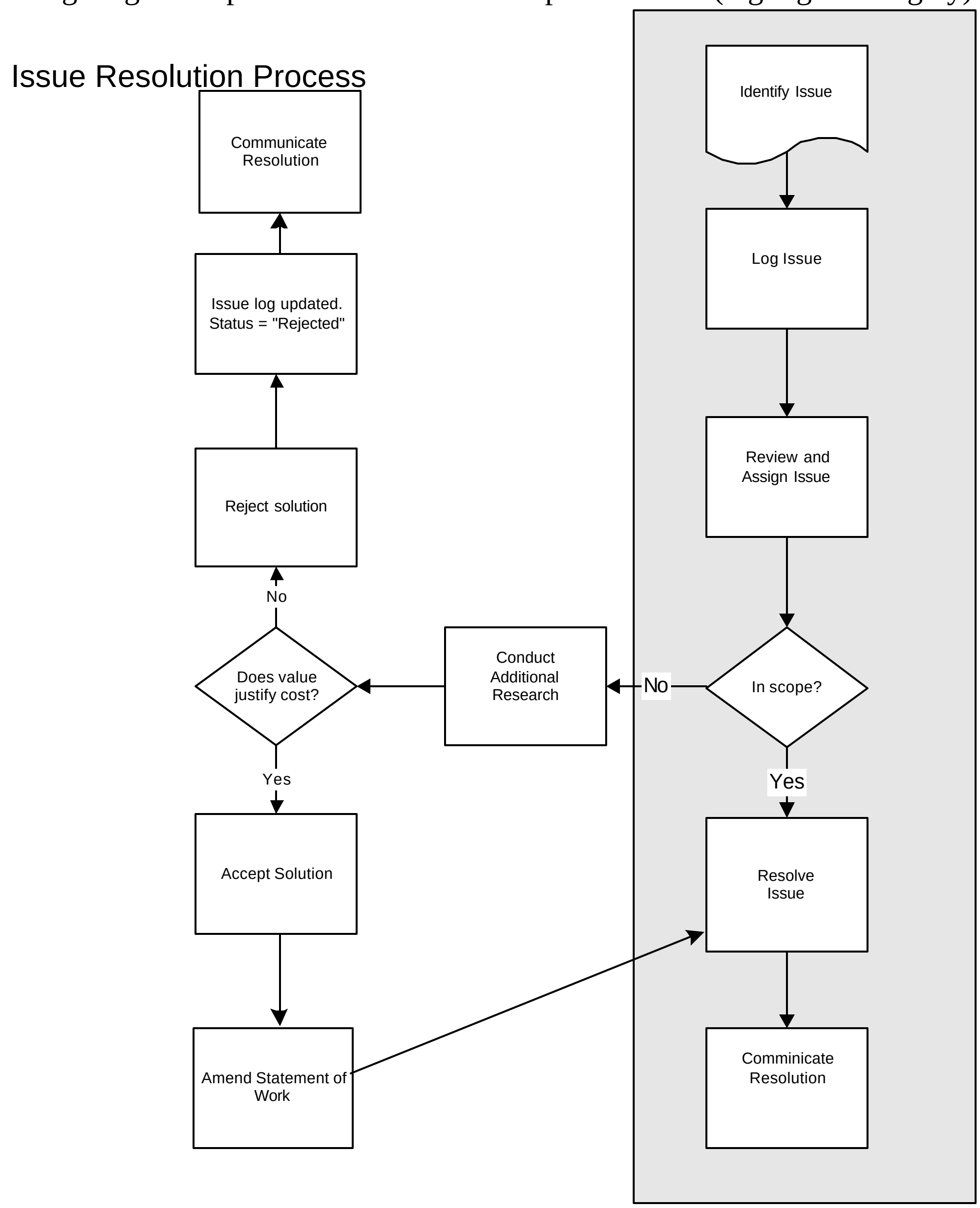
Issue Resolution Process

The issue resolution process consists of five steps.

1. Identify Issue
2. Log Issue
3. Review and Assign Issue
4. Resolve Issue
5. Communicate Resolution

Throughout this process, the automated Project Tracking System (PTS) is utilized to track the status of each issue. (The Project Tracking System is further described later in this Section as well as in Section 11, Automated Project Management Tools.) The PTS is a Microsoft Access based custom designed tool that houses an up to date table of all open and closed issues. It is accessible to everyone on the WDTIP project. Although there are many participants in the issue resolution process, the WDTIP Project Managers have overall responsibility for driving and managing the overall process. The Project Controller is responsible for maintaining all documentation and status on each issue. In addition, the Project Controller will disseminate open issues at the daily project status meetings.

The following diagram depicts the issue resolution process flow (highlighted in gray):



Each of these components, and their related tools and methodologies, are further described in the subsequent sections.

Issue Resolution Procedures

Step 1 – Identify Issue

Project issues may originate from sources within the project or from outside sources, such as end users, policy specialists and technical staff. Traditionally, either project team members or end-users identify most issues. Whenever possible, issues originating within the project team will be resolved and communicated by a Team Lead, eliminating the need to log, track and escalate the issue. However, issues having project-wide impact will always be documented in the Log.

Step 2 - Log Issue

If an issue cannot be resolved in a timely manner (as necessitated by the project workplan) by a Team Lead, it should be recorded directly into the Project Tracking System. If a party from outside the project submits an issue, the Project Controller (or a Team Lead, as appropriate) is responsible for logging the issue into the Project Tracking System. To log an issue, the following data must be entered:

- Source of issue
- Focus Area
  - Conversion
  - Screens
  - Reports
  - Implementation
  - Database
  - Interfaces
  - Overall
- Priority
  - Urgent
  - High
  - Medium
  - Low
- Status
  - Open
  - Closed
  - Re-opened
- Status Date
- Scope Impact
  - Yes
  - No
- Short Description
- Long Description

In addition to these data elements, the issue entry date as well as the person entering the issue automatically default. The issue number (unique identifier) is automatically assigned after the issue is saved and will display to the user on a Dialog Box.

Step 3 - Review and Assign Issue

At the daily project status meeting, each new issue, as well as those with updates, will be reviewed. Any issue that may impact a project milestone or expand the baseline requirements will be categorized as a scope issue. Project Management will assign all issues to a Team Lead or Manager for research and resolution. Additionally, the Project Managers assign a due date and may modify the issue priority. The priority is based on the issue's potential impact on the project in terms of schedule and resources. The Project Controller is responsible for updating the Project Tracking System to reflect the status of each issue. The Project Controller will also forward a copy of the issue to the assigned team member.

Step 4 – Resolve Issue
The project team member who has been assigned a particular issue will be required to research the issue. Following the research and analysis, the responsible team member will prepare the resolution alternatives and present them to the Project Management Team. The Project Managers are responsible for approving the issue resolution. Once an issue has been resolved, a detailed description of the resolution will be incorporated in the Project Tracking System and distributed and discussed at the daily status meeting. The Project Controller will update the issue within the Project Tracking System with the status of "closed" and coordinate notification of appropriate parties. Resolution of each issue will be monitored via regular project control mechanisms.

Step 5 – Communicate Resolution
The Project Controller will communicate the resolution to the appropriate parties involved. In addition, they will verify that the Project Tracking System has been updated.

Roles
The following project staff have key responsibilities in the issue resolution process.

Project Controller
The Project Controller is responsible for administering the issue resolution process for the project. The Project Controller's specific responsibilities will include the following:

- Review new issues in the Project Tracking System and generate issue reports for the daily project status meeting
- Return inadequately documented issues to the issue source for additional documentation
- Update and maintain the Project Tracking System as needed
- Produce and distribute Open Issue reports on a weekly basis or as needed

Project Management Team
The Project Management Team is comprised of the State and Deloitte Project Managers, Team Leads and the Project Controller. This group meets at the daily project status meetings and will review and discuss all new and outstanding issues. This team is also responsible for identifying scope issues and escalating them as appropriate.

Project Managers
The Project Managers are ultimately responsible for directing and managing the resolution of issues.

Project Team Members
All project team members are responsible for identifying issues and entering them into the Project Tracking System. Team members who have been assigned the task of resolving an issue are also responsible for updating resolution alternatives in the PTS.

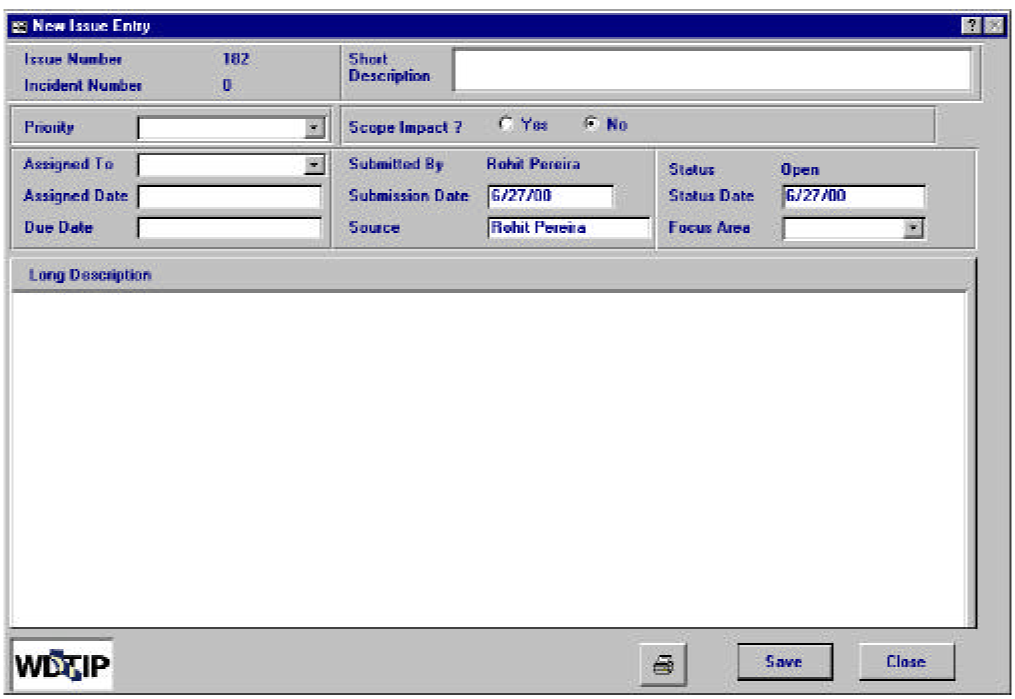
Tools

Project Tracking System
The Project Tracking System is an online application developed in Microsoft Access. All members of the project team will have online access to the Project Tracking System for entering and updating issues.

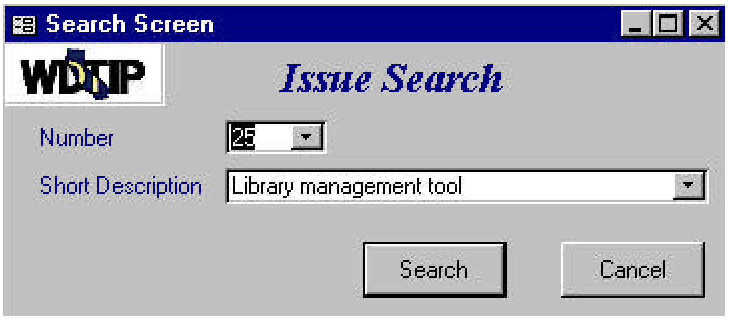
The following screen prints depict the Switchboard, Issue Entry and Update screens of the PTS:

Main Menu (Switchboard)

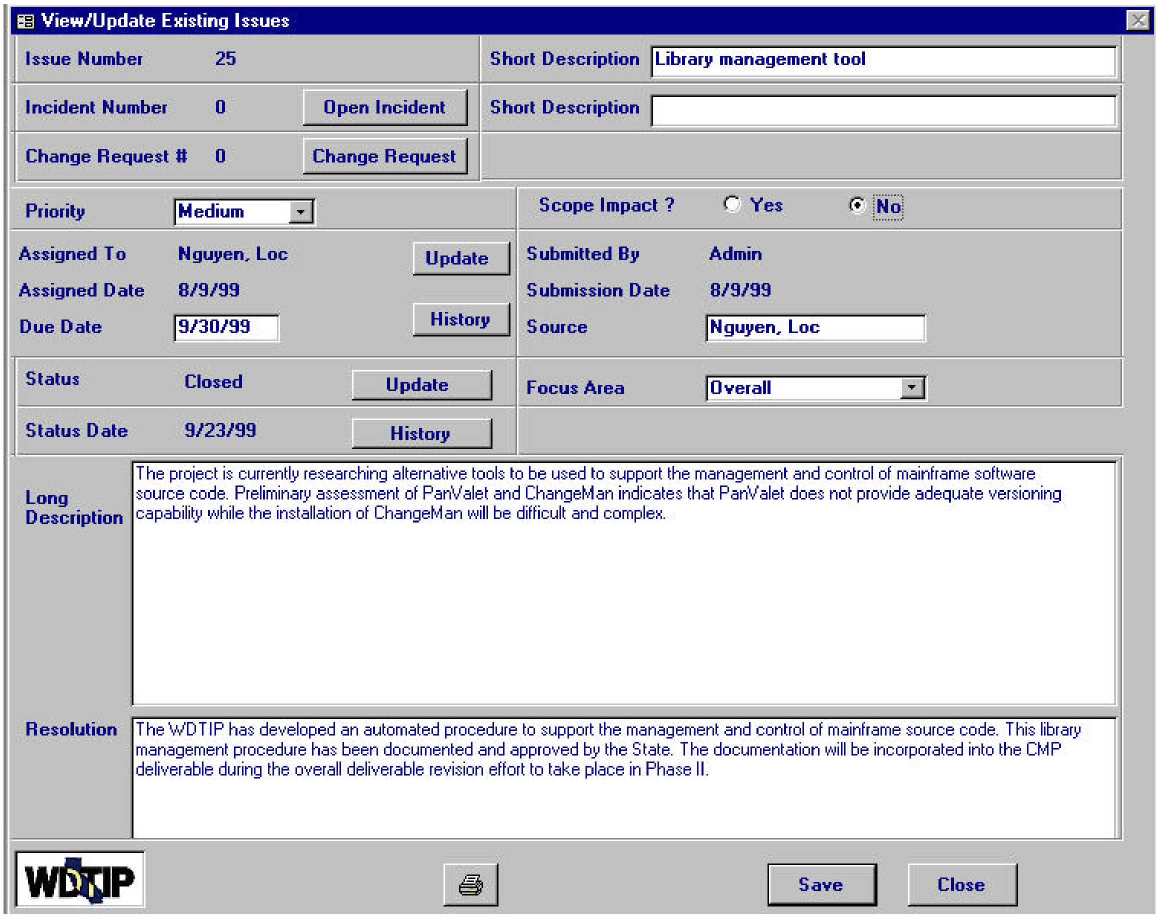
New Issue Entry Screen



View Update Existing Issue (Search)



Update Issue Screen



The following data will be stored and maintained in the database:

Field	Brief Description	Valid Values	Update Features
Issue Number	Unique identifier for each issue	System assigned number	Not updateable
Incident Number	Unique identifier for each incident	System assigned number	Not updateable
Priority	How urgent the issue is to the project	Restricted to: Low, Medium, High, Urgent	Updateable but required on the Issue Entry form
Due Date	Date by which the issue should be resolved	"mm/dd/yy" format. Date must be after the Submission Date	Updateable, although not technically enforced, it is the responsibility of the Project Managers to set the Due Date
Scope	Whether the issue is	Yes / No	Updateable

Field	Brief Description	Valid Values	Update Features
Impact?	related to scope or not		
Submitted By	Person entering the issue	The current system user	Not updateable
Submission Date	The date that the issue is being submitted	"mm/dd/yy" format. Default value is current date	Not updateable
Source	The person who identified the issue	No restriction on value entered. Default value is current user	Updateable but required on the Issue Entry form
Focus Area	The subsystem that the issue is related to	Restricted to: Conversion, Screens, Database, Implementation, Interfaces, Overall, Reports	Updateable but required on the Issue Entry form
Short Description	Brief description/title for the issue	No restriction on value	Not updateable from the Issue Update Form. Required field in the Issue Entry form
Long Description	Description, comments, questions, proposed resolution, additional people assigned to issue	No restriction on value	Updateable but required on the Issue Entry form
Assigned To	Person to which the issue is assigned	Lists WDTIP team members to choose from, but entry is not limited to the list. Only one entry is allowed. Additional people assigned to the issue should be entered in the Long Description field	First entry not editable but update is allowed on the Issue Update form. History is viewable on the Update screen
Assigned Date	Date that the issue was assigned to the above person	"mm/dd/yy" format. Must be after the Submission Date	First entry not editable but update is allowed on the Issue Update form. History is viewable on the Update screen

Field	Brief Description	Valid Values	Update Features
Status	Current status of the issue	Restricted to: Open, Closed, Re-Open. Default value is "Open"	First entry not editable but update is allowed on the Issue Update form. History is viewable on the Update screen
Status Date	Date that the status was entered	"mm/dd/yy" format. Default value is current date. Must be after the Submission Date	First entry not editable but update is allowed on the Issue Update form. History is viewable on the Update screen
Change Request Number	Unique identifier for each Change Request	System assigned number	Not updateable
Resolution	The final resolution for the issue	No restriction on value entered	Not an available field on the Issue Entry form. Must be entered on the Issue Update form

As additional functionality is identified, the Project Tracking System may be enhanced when appropriate.

Project Tracking System Administration
The Project Controller has administrative authority over the Project Tracking System. Updates and correction of data are allowed; however in no instance will issues be deleted from the Log.

Reports
In addition to its general tracking purpose, the Project Tracking System will provide management reports for use in daily status meetings. The two database generated reports used most often are: Open Issues by Assignment and Open Issues by Due Date. Other reports include all overdue issues, assignments by team member, and issues by priority. PTS reports can be generated at any time. An Open Issues by Due Date report will be generated daily to be reviewed at the daily status meeting.